

Message Text

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73

ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 H-02 DHA-02

L-03 /074 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MVANORDER:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

EUR/P - MR. JERABEK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN

NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE

AF/P - MR. POPE

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 029366

R 270151Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
FEBRUARY 26, 1976:

FOLLOWING UP ON MR. GALLAGHER AND MR. DYKES, A NUMBER OF
YOU HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST ON KNOWING WHEN THEY WOULD BE
ARRIVING IN THE UNITED STATES.

FIRST, THEY ARE NOW IN ATHENS WITH THEIR FAMILIES. WE
EXPECT THEM TO ARRIVE AT DULLES TOMORROW AFTERNOON AT
1440 WITH THEIR FAMILIES ON TWA FLIGHT 891.

Q. AND THEY WON'T BE AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS?

A. BEFORE THEN, NO.

Q. I MEAN THEY WON'T BE AVAILABLE TO US THEN, OR JUST FOR
PHOTOS, OR WHAT?

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A. I DON'T KNOW. PROBABLY NOT. I THINK THAT GENERALLY
THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE TO HAVE A COMPLETE PHYSICAL WHEN

THEY GET HERE.

Q. WE WEREN'T GOING TO HURT THEM, WE WERE JUST GOING
TO TALK TO THEM.

A. NO, BUT THEY'VE BEEN KEPT FOR OVER FOUR MONTHS, AND I DON'T THINK IT IS UNREASONABLE FOR YOU TO EXPECT THAT THEY MIGHT LIKE A LITTLE TIME TO REST AND GATHER THEIR THOUGHTS BEFORE YOU MEET THEM. I AM SURE THEY WILL MEET WITH THE PRESS AT SOME EARLY TIME.

Q. HAVE THEY TOLD YOU THAT, OR IS IT WHAT THE DEPARTMENT IS RECOMMENDING?

A. I HAVEN'T SPOKEN TO MR. GALLAGHER AND MR. DYKES, NO.

Q. SO YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHETHER THEY'LL MEET US.

A. I AM ASSUMING THAT THEY PROBABLY WON'T. BUT ALL I KNOW IS THEY ARE ARRIVING AT 1440. I KNOW THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE A THOROUGH PHYSICAL EXAMINATION UPON THEIR RETURN.

Q. THERE'S A NEWS REPORT TO THE EFFECT THAT AN ISRAELI TEAM OF LEGAL EXPERTS IS ON ITS WAY TO WASHINGTON FOR A DEFINITION OF "TERMINATION OF THE STATE OF WAR." DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT?

A. NO, I DON'T. YOU KNOW, THERE IS A CONSTANT EXCHANGE BETWEEN US AND THE ISRAELIS ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS. I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT SPECIFIC STORY.

Q. ON THAT SUBJECT, IS THERE A COMMITMENT BY THIS GOVERNMENT NOT TO DISCUSS THE SALE OF ARMS TO EGYPT WITHOUT THE CONSENT, THE PRECONSENT, OF ISRAEL?

A. I SAW A FOREIGN NEWS REPORT ON THAT, AND IT IS KIND OF DIFFICULT TO DISCUSS OR COMMENT ON THAT SORT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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SPECULATIVE STORY. WE HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS, AND I DON'T THINK I CAN GO BEYOND THAT.

Q. YOU'RE SAYING, IN OTHER WORDS, THAT SINCE WE HAVE DONE IT THERE IS NO U.S. COMMITMENT NOT TO DO SO? OR ARE YOU SPEAKING TO WHOM?

A. PARDON ME?

Q. WHEN YOU SAY WE HAVE SPOKEN -- TO WHOM?

A. WE HAVE SPOKEN PUBLICLY ON THIS SUBJECT. WE HAVE SAID THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAVE MADE KNOWN THAT THEY HAD AN INTEREST AND THAT AT SUCH TIME AS WE MAKE A DECISION

WE WILL BE CONSULTING WITH THE CONGRESS. BUT I DO NOT HAVE ANYTHING BEYOND THAT.

Q. HAS THE SECRETARY CALLED BACK THE U.S. AMBASSADORS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO SORT OF REVIEW THE BIDDING OUT THERE?

A. YES. AMBASSADOR EILTS IN EGYPT, AMBASSADOR PICKERING IN JORDAN, AND AMBASSADOR MURPHY IN SYRIA WILL BE COMING BACK.

Q. WHEN?

A. I THINK AMBASSADOR EILTS IS COMING BACK NEXT WEEK OR OVER THE WEEKEND. I DO NOT HAVE A SPECIFIC DATE ON AMBASSADORS MURPHY AND PICKERING, BUT THEY WILL BE RETURNING IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

Q. WHY ARE THEY COMING?

A. TO CONTINUE OUR CONSULTATIONS. I THINK WE HAD INDICATED EARLIER THAT WE WOULD PROBABLY BE CALLING THEM BACK TO CONSULT AGAIN.

Q. IS AMBASSADOR TOON COMING BACK, TOO?

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A. I DO NOT THINK THERE IS A PLAN FOR AMBASSADOR TOON TO COME BACK.

Q. DO WE HAVE AN AMBASSADOR IN SAUDI ARABIA ON STATION AT THE MOMENT?

A. YES, AMBASSADOR PORTER.

Q. HE IS THERE?

A. YES. HE HAS PRESENTED HIS CREDENTIALS.

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